

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 AID-20 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-11 FRB-02

INR-10 NSAE-00 RSC-01 TRSE-00 XMB-07 OPIC-12 SPC-03

CIEP-02 LAB-06 SIL-01 OMB-01 INT-08 GSA-02 DODE-00

PM-07 H-03 L-03 NSC-07 PA-04 PRS-01 SS-20 USIA-15

DRC-01 /173 W

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FM AMEMBASSY DUBLIN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5477

INFO AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EMIN, PINS, EI

SUBJ: IRA ATTACKS CANADIAN INVESTMENT IN IRISH MINING

REF: DUBLIN A-164 DEC 4, 1973; DUBLIN 1312 SEPT 27, 1973
AND PREVIOUS

1. CANADIAN CHARGE PHILLIPS PROVIDED EMBASSY WITH COPY OF LETTER DATED MARCH 6 MAILED TO CANADIAN AMBASSADOR BY IRISH REPUBLICAN PUBLICITY BUREAU (PROVO SINN FEIN/IRA) ATTACKING CANADIAN INVESTMENT IN IRISH MINING. ISSUE HAS RECEIVED CONSIDERABLE PUBLICITY HERE SINCE MID-FEBRUARY BID BY COMINCO (CANADIAN) AND ANGLO-AMERICAN/CHARTER CONSOLIDATED CONCERNS TO TAKE OVER TARA MINE, RELIABLY ESTIMATED AS RICHEST LEAD-ZINC MINE IN EUROPE (AND POSSIBLY WORLD).

2. LETTER STATES THAT MINERAL DEPOSITS IN IRELAND BELONG SOLELY TO PEOPLE OF IRELAND AND THEREFORE STOCK EXCHANGE TRANSACTIONS (RELATED TO TAKE-OVER BID) IN CANADA OR ELSEWHERE ARE MEANINGLESS. IT ALLEGES THAT IRISH VESTED INTERESTS, INCLUDING GOVT AND

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EX-GOVT, ARE PREPARING TO DISPOSE OF IRISH MINERALS FOR PRIVATE

GAIN AND CLAIMS POSSIBLE COLLUSION BETWEEN "INDEPENDENT" JUDICIARY AND THESE INTERESTS. LETTER REQUESTS CANADIAN GOVERNMENT ASSURANCES "THAT IT DOES NOT AND WILL NOT GIVE ANY ENCOURAGEMENT TO CANADIAN CITIZENS AND COMPANIES OR ASSIST THEM IN ANY WAY TO ENGAGE IN NEO-COLONIALIST POLICIES IN IRELAND", ALTHOUGH CANADIAN EXPERTISE AND KNOWLEDGE AND ERECTION OF ORE SMELTER WOULD BE WELCOMED. DOCUMENT CONCLUDES THAT IRA HAS NO QUARREL WITH GOVERNMENT OF PEOPLE OF CANADA AND ASKS FOR ACKNOWLEDGEMENT IN PRESS THAT LETTER HAD BEEN RECEIVED AND FORWARDED TO CANADIAN GOVERNMENT. (COPY OF LETTER POUCH TO EUR/NE AND EMBASSY OTTAWA).

3. PHILLIPS TOLD EMBOFF HE HAD BEEN INSTRUCTED NOT RPT NOT TO ACKNOWLEDGE LETTER BUT TO RESPOND TO PRESS QUERIES. HOWEVER, COPY OF LETTER WAS HANDED IN TO IRISH PRESS AND REPORTED ON BRIEFLY ON MARCH 15, TOGETHER WITH ACKNOWLEDGEMENT BY PHILLIPS THAT LETTER HAD BEEN RECEIVED AND FORWARDED "AS ROUTINE MATTER" TO OTTAWA. PRESS REPORTED PHILLIPS POINTED OUT THAT CANADIAN GOVERNMENT RECOGNIZED RIGHT OF NATIONAL GOVERNMENT TO CONTROL OF RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT AND ACKNOWLEDGED THAT CANADA MIGHT BE SOURCE OF EXPERTISE IN MINERAL RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT WHICH MIGHT BE BENEFIT TO IRISH PEOPLE. PHILLIPS SAID REPORT OF HIS COMMENTS WAS GENERALLY ACCURATE. HE DOES NOT SEEM OVERLY CONCERNED RE MATTER.

4. COMMENT: FOREIGN, ESPECIALLY CANADIAN INVOLVEMENT IN IRISH MINERAL EXTRACTION HAS BEEN ISSUE OF CONTROVERSY AND LEFT-WING ATTACK SINCE VERY SUBSTANTIAL LEAD, ZINC, AND COPPER DEPOSITS DISCOVERED DURING PAST FEW YEARS, SPURRED ON BY 20-YEAR TAX HOLIDAY LEGISLATED BY PREVIOUS GOVERNMENT WHICH HAS SINCE BEEN DISPENSED WITH BY PRESENT GOVERNMENT (SEE REFS). MINERALS EXPLORATION AND DEVELOPMENT HAS BEEN PERFORMED LARGELY BY CANADIAN AND CANADIAN-BACK IRISH INTERESTS. RECENT TAKE-OVER BID SPURRED EVEN MORE CONTROVERSY, AS COMINCO AND CHARTER CONSOLIDATED OFFERED \$25 PER SHARE, ABOUT \$10 ABOVE CURRENT STOCK EXCHANGE VALUE, SUGGESTING THAT TARA MINE EVEN MORE VALUABLE THAN PUBLICLY REPORTED.

5. ALTHOUGH BRITISH AND AMERICAN INTERESTS ARE INVOLVED IN IRISH MINING, THEY ARE NOT AS PROMINENT AS CANADIAN, AND NEITHER BRITISH OR US EMBASSIES HAVE RECEIVED SIMILAR APPROACH FROM IRA.
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CONCEIVABLE, HOWEVER, THAT AS US INVESTMENT IN IRISH ECONOMY INCREASES, USG AND AMERICAN FIRMS MAY BECOME TARGET OF AT LEAST VERBAL ATTACK FROM IRA AND OTHER LEFT-WING GROUPS.
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